



US Army Corps  
of Engineers.

SAN FRANCISCO DISTRICT

# PUBLIC NOTICE

NUMBER: 20170N

DATE: MAY 8, 1998

RESPONSE REQUIRED BY: JUNE 8, 1998

Regulatory Branch

333 Market Street

San Francisco, CA 94105-2197

PROJECT MANAGER: Peter Fox Phone: (415)977-8454 E-mail: pfox@smtp.usace.army.mil

**1. INTRODUCTION:** A.D. Seeno Construction Company (Seeno), 4021 Port Chicago Highway, P.O. Box 4113, Concord, California, 94524-4113 through its representative, RIO Associates (Contact: Lucy Macmillan at 415-331-0268) has applied for a Department of the Army permit to fill approximately 1.77 acres of wetlands, as part of the Fieldcrest project in Cordelia, Solano County, California in order to construct residential housing. This application is being processed pursuant to the provisions of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344).

**2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** As shown in the attached drawings, the applicant plans to fill wetlands on the property in order to construct residential housing. As part of this proposed development, four wetland areas, two drainages and portions of a perennial stream channel would be filled. A bridge crossing at American Canyon Creek with associated rip-rap is also planned (see Figures 5, 6). No sensitive plant or animal species are present within Corps jurisdictional areas on the project site. Since more than 500 linear feet of American Canyon Creek is impacted on this project, Nationwide Permit 26 does not apply.

Rip rap for the proposed bridge crossing at American Canyon Creek will consist of loose rock conforming to Caltrans Standard Specifications 72-2.02. It will be placed in the creekbed and will cover approximately 200 linear feet with an average width at the ordinary high water mark of 28 feet. The total volume of rock to be placed is approximately 722 cubic yards.

Seeno proposes to build 394 single family homes on approximately 165 acres, with proposed lot sizes of 4,500 to 5,000 square feet. Two open space areas, a

63 acre area on the hills to the west of the lots and a 34 acre area within the Green Valley Fault Zone, are included in the project design. Seeno proposes that these homes will sell for approximately \$170,000 to \$200,000. The proposed Fieldcrest project is intended to contribute to the Fairfield Community and Solano County area by providing affordable housing and open space areas.

Three vegetative communities are present on the project site, including non-native grassland, valley needlegrass grassland, and riparian woodland. Native wildflowers would be expected to be present in the spring. Plant species present indicate that the site has been heavily grazed.

To mitigate for the fill of 1.77 acres of wetlands, Seeno proposes to create 2.32 acres (greater than 1:1 ratio) of seasonal wetland habitat. The plan is designed to create two wetland and riparian areas with improved cover, forage and aquatic habitat values and to establish riparian plantings along 1040 linear feet of the degraded upper reach of an intermittent tributary referred to as Drainage 2 (see figure 3B).

A detention basin will be located between the two areas to attenuate peak flows and settle-out sediment entrained in high surface runoff events. Both surface and sub-surface drainage will be directed to the stock pond or wetland mitigation sites. Native riparian and upland plant species will be planted in the areas immediately surrounding the created wetlands.

Topsoils from affected existing wetland areas will be removed and stockpiled. Where possible, this soil will be redistributed over the mitigation areas prior to any

planting or seeding. The mitigation site will be modified before initial planting to help establish both wetlands and riparian habitat as follows: all non-native vegetation will be cleared, the site will be graded, a temporary irrigation system will be installed, and soil amendment or stabilization will be conducted if necessary.

**3. STATE APPROVALS:** Under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. Section 1341), an applicant for a Corps permit must obtain a State water quality certification or waiver before a Corps permit may be issued. Seeno has provided the Corps with evidence that a valid request for State water quality certification has been submitted to the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Board. No Corps permit will be granted until the applicant obtains the required certification or waiver. A waiver shall be explicit, or it will be deemed to have occurred if the State fails to or refuses to act on a valid request for certification within 60 days or after the receipt of a valid request, unless the District Engineer determines a shorter or longer period is reasonable for the State to act.

Those parties concerned with any water quality issues associated with this project should write to the Executive Officer, California Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region, 5550 Skyline Blvd., Suite A, Santa Rosa, California 95403, by the close of the comment period of this public notice.

#### **4. PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL**

**ASSESSMENT:** The Corps has assessed the environmental impacts of the action proposed in subject permit application in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Public Law 91-190), and pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality's Regulations 40 CFR 1500-1508, and Corps of Engineer's Regulations, 33 CFR 230 and 325. Unless otherwise stated, the Preliminary Environmental Assessment presented herein describes only the impacts (direct, indirect and cumulative) resulting from activities within the jurisdiction of the Corps of Engineers. Supporting data used in the preparation of this Preliminary Environmental Assessment are on file at the Regulatory Branch, Corps of Engineers,

333 Market Street, San Francisco, California, 94105. Preliminary Environmental Assessment resulted in the following findings:

#### **a. IMPACTS ON THE AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM**

##### **(1) PHYSICAL / CHEMICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND ANTICIPATED CHANGES**

**Substrate:** As part of this development, four wetland areas, two drainages and portions of a perennial stream channel, for a total of 1.77 acres of jurisdictional area are to be filled and replaced with concrete substrate, and a concrete culvert under the proposed bridge crossing. As much as 24-36 inches of topsoil will be scraped from the wetland areas under the direction of a qualified restoration ecologist and applied directly to the newly created mitigation sites. Once these areas have been constructed, grading will occur on the terraced areas which will be utilized for widened wetland zones. The northernmost mitigation area will be graded to meet the elevation of the stock pond, and the southern mitigation site to form a basin to collect surface water.

##### **Currents, Circulation, and Drainage Patterns:**

Stormwater drains overland flowing into American Canyon Creek for the north watershed. A 42-inch storm drain outfalls from the existing stock pond area to the present storm drain system within the Cordelia Villages Unit Three subdivision, which ultimately feeds into American Canyon Creek. Existing peak flow rates to the stock pond area are about 350 cubic feet per second and about 85 cubic feet per second from the northerly watershed to American Canyon Creek. The discharges to American Canyon Creek will be through the concrete culvert. Drainage from the south watershed will be directed to the detention pond / created wetland area. About half of the developed area within this watershed will drain directly to the southerly created wetlands pond along with subsurface drainage. Outfall from this wetland pond will be to the adjacent detention pond and will serve to reduce sediment during high flow events.

The proposed project will alter the circulation and drainage patterns of surface flows on the project site in areas where grading occurs. Surface runoff from the largest portion of the site currently flows in an easterly direction, draining to the valley floor with a smaller area draining in a northeasterly direction into American Canyon Creek. While drainage patterns will be affected as a result of the increase in impervious surface area, all stormwater flows will be directed into the storm drain system. The applicant plans to install underground drainage facilities in areas of fill placement to capture surface flows and direct these flows into the storm drain system currently serving the Cordelia Village subdivisions to the east of the project site.

**Flood Control Function of Wetland:** Although the flood control functions of jurisdictional areas to be affected by the project will be lost, the development plan calls for the installation of a stormwater detention basin to compensate for the loss of flood storage capacity and to mitigate for the increases in peak stormwater flow rates occurring with site development. The city of Fairfield specifically requires new development to discharge storm runoff at volumes no greater than the capacity of any portion of the existing downstream system by utilizing any of a variety of approved methods. The creation of 2.32 acres of seasonal wetland on-site will replace the loss of flood control function on the project site as well.

**Erosion and Sedimentation Rates:** The applicant will comply with the project's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to minimize potential erosion and sedimentation impacts to the created wetland areas on the project site.

Loose rip rap will be placed at the bottom of the concrete arch culvert to help minimize disturbances within the creek channel. Activities associated with bridge construction in American Canyon Creek will be conducted in accordance with best management practices. This will help ensure that disturbances within the creek channel and along its banks are kept to a minimum. A qualified environmental monitor will also be present on site during construction of the bridge. Stabilization and revegetation of the creek

banks disturbed during bridge construction should help reduce the long-term potential for erosion and siltation problems of American Canyon Creek.

**Water Quality:** The applicant plans to implement best management practices and other mitigation measures designed to reduce any potential water quality impacts to a minimum. They plan to adhere to the terms and conditions outlined in the California Department of Fish and Game's Streambed Alteration Agreement and the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Section 401 water quality waiver. This compliance should result in eliminating any violations of state water quality standards.

## **(2) BIOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND ANTICIPATED CHANGES**

**Endangered Species:** No special status plant species were observed in any of the wetland areas surveyed by RIO Associates at the proposed Fieldcrest site in Cordelia based on their April 25, 1997 botanical survey. Drs. Samuel McGinnis and Richard Arnold conducted assessments on the proposed Fieldcrest project site in 1997. They concluded that, provided suggested precautions are taken during construction to protect the elderberry beetle and its species host plant, there would be no significant impact to any special status wildlife in the proposed project area.

Although Dr. McGinnis states that the site provides a suitable habitat for the red-legged frog, the burrowing owl and the California tiger salamander, he concludes that the development of the project site will have no significant adverse impact on the subject species.

The assessment concluded, for a variety of reasons that the stock pond and Areas A, B, C and D, are not considered suitable habitats for either Vernal Pool Fairy or Tadpole Shrimp. The California Freshwater shrimp, due to a combination of factors, according to the applicants consultant, is also not likely to occur in the on-site portion of American Canyon Creek.

**Habitat for Fish, Other Aquatic Organisms and Wildlife:** An aquatic habitat assessment was performed by Entomological Consulting Services,

Limited for the Fieldcrest site in October, 1997. The habitats included a stock pond, seasonally ponded wetlands, four intermittent drainages and American Canyon Creek. Figure 3A, B illustrates the locations of these aquatic habitats.

## **b. IMPACTS ON RESOURCES OUTSIDE THE AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM**

### **1) Physical/Chemical Characteristics and Anticipated Changes**

**Air Quality** – Project activity would have minor, short-term impacts on air quality in the vicinity of the project site as a result of equipment operation during excavation, filling and grading activities. Based on the relative size of the proposed project and limited to an evaluation of air quality impacts only within Corps of Engineers' jurisdictional areas, the Corps has determined that the total direct and non-direct project emissions would not exceed the de minimis threshold levels of 40 CFR 93.153. Therefore the proposed project would conform to the State air quality implementation Plan (SIP) for California.

**Noise Conditions** – Short-term, adverse impacts to ambient noise levels in the local area and specifically to Cordelia Village Units 3 and 4 just east of the project site, could be expected during project construction due to equipment operation. The estimated Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) and noise due to increased traffic at the project site is within that of the Fairfield "General Plan".

### **2) Socioeconomic Characteristics and Anticipated Changes**

**Aesthetic Quality** – The project may be visible from several offsite locations primarily in the Cordelia Villages area to the east. Due to height and elevation restrictions, the project will be compatible with the continuing urbanization of the Fairfield area. The background views of the adjacent ridges and mountains will not be obstructed.

**Agricultural Activity** – The project site is currently used for grazing cattle. The site is planned and zoned for residential development and is recognized in the 1992 Fairfield General Plan as a planned residential neighborhood. A limited amount of grazing land on the subject property will be eliminated. Grazing lands are available elsewhere in the project vicinity, so the loss of grazing on this property will be long-term, but minor in magnitude.

**Economics and Employment** – No permanent jobs would be created on-site in conjunction with the project, but construction of the proposed project would indirectly create additional demand for retail, real estate, and residential related service jobs in the Fairfield area.

**Traffic and Transportation** – The proposed project would cause an increase in the number of vehicles and subsequent impact on adjacent roadways and intersections. This effect is considered long term, adverse and minor.

### **3) Historic-Cultural Characteristics and Anticipated Changes**

**Historic-Cultural Characteristics** – An archeological records search was made by the Northwest Information Center and it was determined that although four prehistoric sites have been recorded in an area adjacent to the project area, no survey was performed on the actual property site. Also, no National Register or California landmarks are listed for the project site. A systematic survey performed January 6 and 7 was conducted on the property and the crew found no evidence of historic or prehistoric occupation.

If cultural resources listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places are identified during construction activities, the USACE will coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Officer to take into account any resulting effects on the project.

## **c. SUMMARY OF INDIRECT IMPACTS**

There will be some loss of valley needlegrass grassland, a special status habitat, during grading and construction. Additional storm drainage flow downstream to American Canyon Creek is anticipated due to loss of existing flood storage capacity. The City of Fairfield's General Plan (PF 9.2, 1992) requires the use of detention ponds to keep storm runoff volumes within the capacity existing downstream.

#### **d. SUMMARY OF CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

Through mitigation for fill of 1.77 acres of wetland, a net gain of 0.55 acres will result for the proposed project site. With landslide repair and construction of a detention basin, less sediment will ultimately flow into American Canyon Creek. This analysis presumes successful implementation of the mitigation plan with full mitigation acreage created.

A number of other residential developments within a 5-mile radius of the project have been completed. Cordelia Villages I and Southbrook to the south, and Cordelia Villages 3 and 4 to the east, plus at least 13 other developments within the City of Fairfield are underway, or are in the planning phases.

#### **e. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on an analysis of the above identified impacts, a preliminary determination has been made that it will not be necessary to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the subject permit application. The Environmental Assessment for the proposed action has, however, not yet been finalized and this preliminary determination may be reconsidered if additional information is developed.

**5. EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES:** Evaluation of the project impacts includes application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency under Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344(b)). An evaluation under the 404(b)(1) Guidelines indicates that the project is not water dependent.

The applicant has submitted an analysis of

alternatives for the project to help determine compliance to the guidelines. Four off-site properties were considered (see Southbrook Project, USACE P.N., 21068N dated March 27, 1998) as well as at least three on-site alternatives which would meet the purpose of the project with no or minimal effects of the jurisdictional waters of the United States. The applicant states that there is no practicable alternative for his project. The Analysis of Alternatives is available for review in our office.

An analysis of off-site alternatives was performed for nearby Southbrook development. The purpose of the project is to provide residential and public uses for the city of Fairfield consistent with the City's General Plan, the Cordelia Area Specific Plan and the City's Comprehensive Annexation Plan.. A review of the potential project sites consistent with the broad guidelines of section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act was made. A search for vacant parcels within the City's Urban Limit Line revealed that these properties are either planned for near-term development or are under consideration for annexation and development at some future time after comprehensive land use plans have been prepared.

**6. PUBLIC INTEREST EVALUATION:** The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts, of the proposed activity and its intended use. Evaluation of the probable impacts the proposed activity may have on the public interest requires a careful weighing of all those factors which become relevant in each particular case. The benefits which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonable foreseeable detriments. The decision whether to authorize a proposal, and if so the conditions under which it will be allowed to occur, are therefore determined by the outcome of the general balancing process. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal must be considered including the cumulative effects thereof. Among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values,

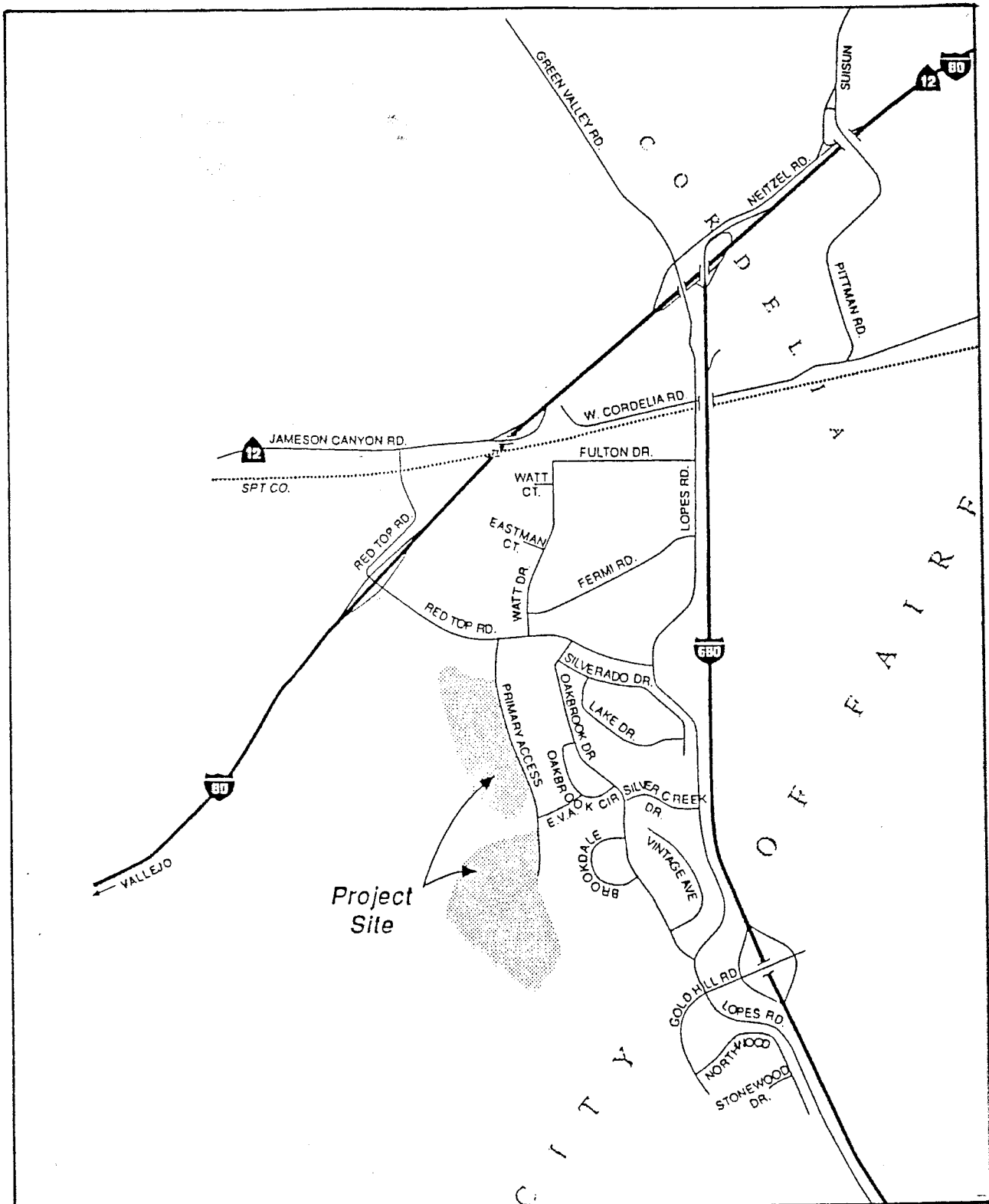
fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shore conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership, and in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

changes of a minor nature which are made in the final permit action will be provided on request.

**7. CONSIDERATION OF COMMENTS:** The Corps is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed project. Any comments received by the Corps will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

**8. SUBMISSION OF COMMENTS:** Interested parties may submit in writing any comments concerning this activity. Comments should include the applicant's name, the number, and the date of this notice and should be forwarded so as to reach this office within the comment period specified on page one of this notice. Comments should be sent to Attention: Lieutenant Colonel Richard J. Thompson, District Engineer, Attention: Regulatory Branch. It is Corps policy to forward any such comments which include objections to the applicant for resolution or rebuttal. Any person may also request, in writing, within the comment period of this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing. Additional details may be obtained by contacting the applicant whose address is indicated in the first paragraph of this notice, or by contacting Mr. Peter Fox of our office (telephone 415-977-8454). Details on any





PURPOSE: Residential Development

DATUM: NGVD  
USGS 1980  
Cordelia Quadrangle  
7.5 Minute Series

ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERS:  
See Appendix C of Permit Application

SITE LOCATION MAP

Scale ~ 1:2400

North

RIO Associates  
480 Gate 5 Rd.  
Suite 300  
Sausalito, CA 94965  
(415) 331-0268

Fieldcrest Project

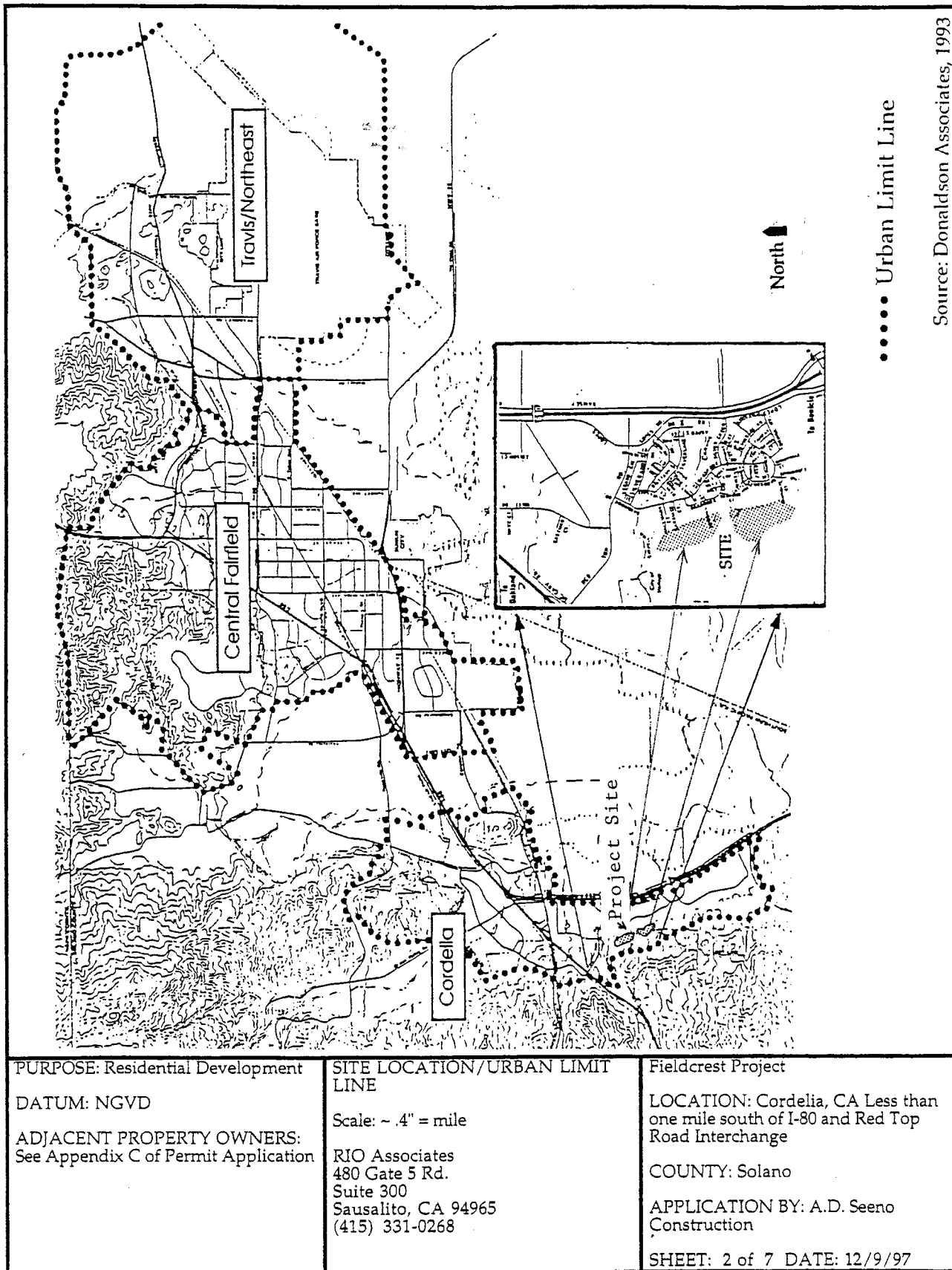
LOCATION: Cordelia, CA Less than  
one mile south of I-80 and Red Top  
Road Interchange

COUNTY: Solano

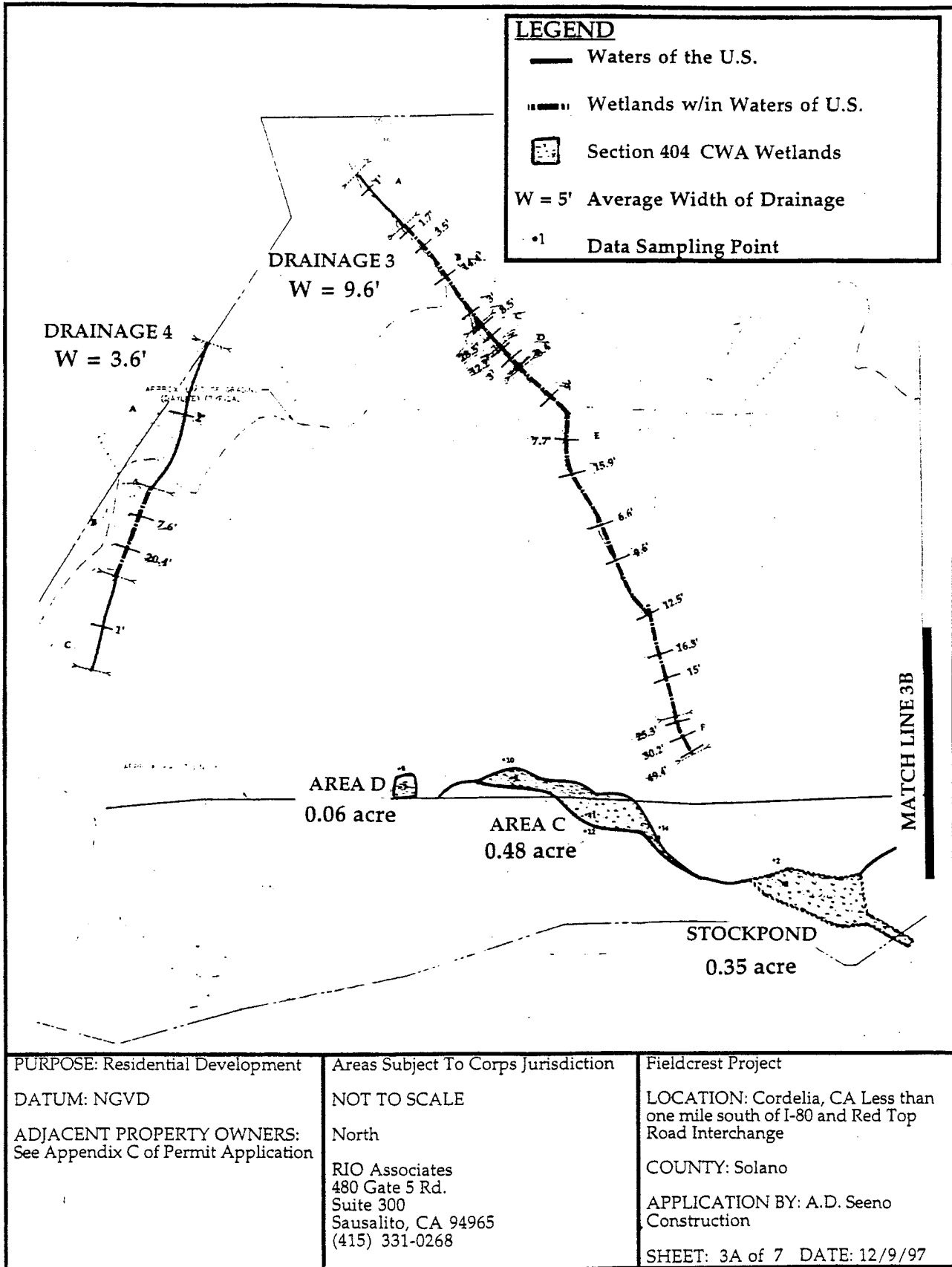
APPLICATION BY: A.D. Seeno  
Construction

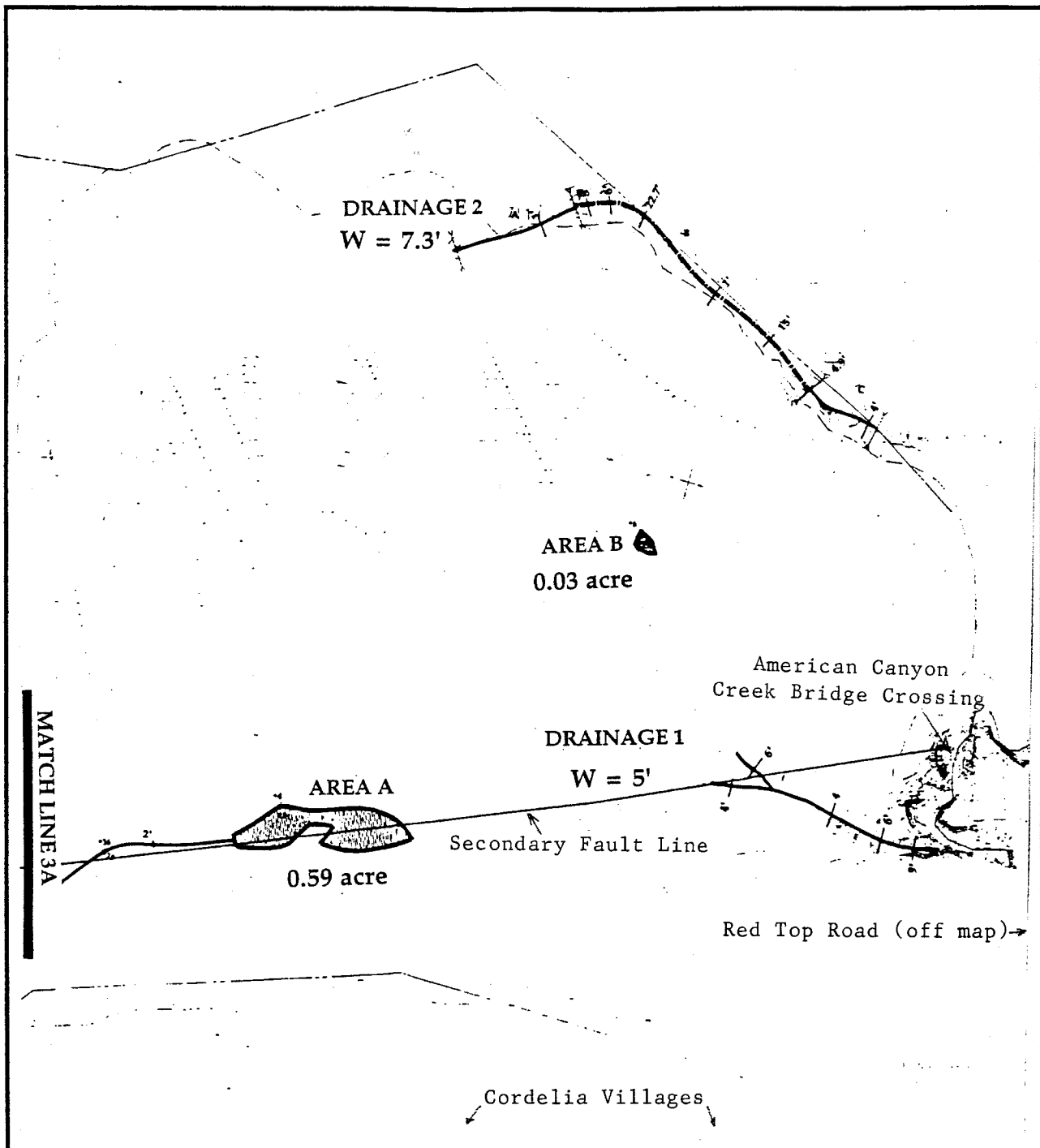
SHEET: 1a of 7 DATE: 12/9/97





Source: Donaldson Associates, 1993



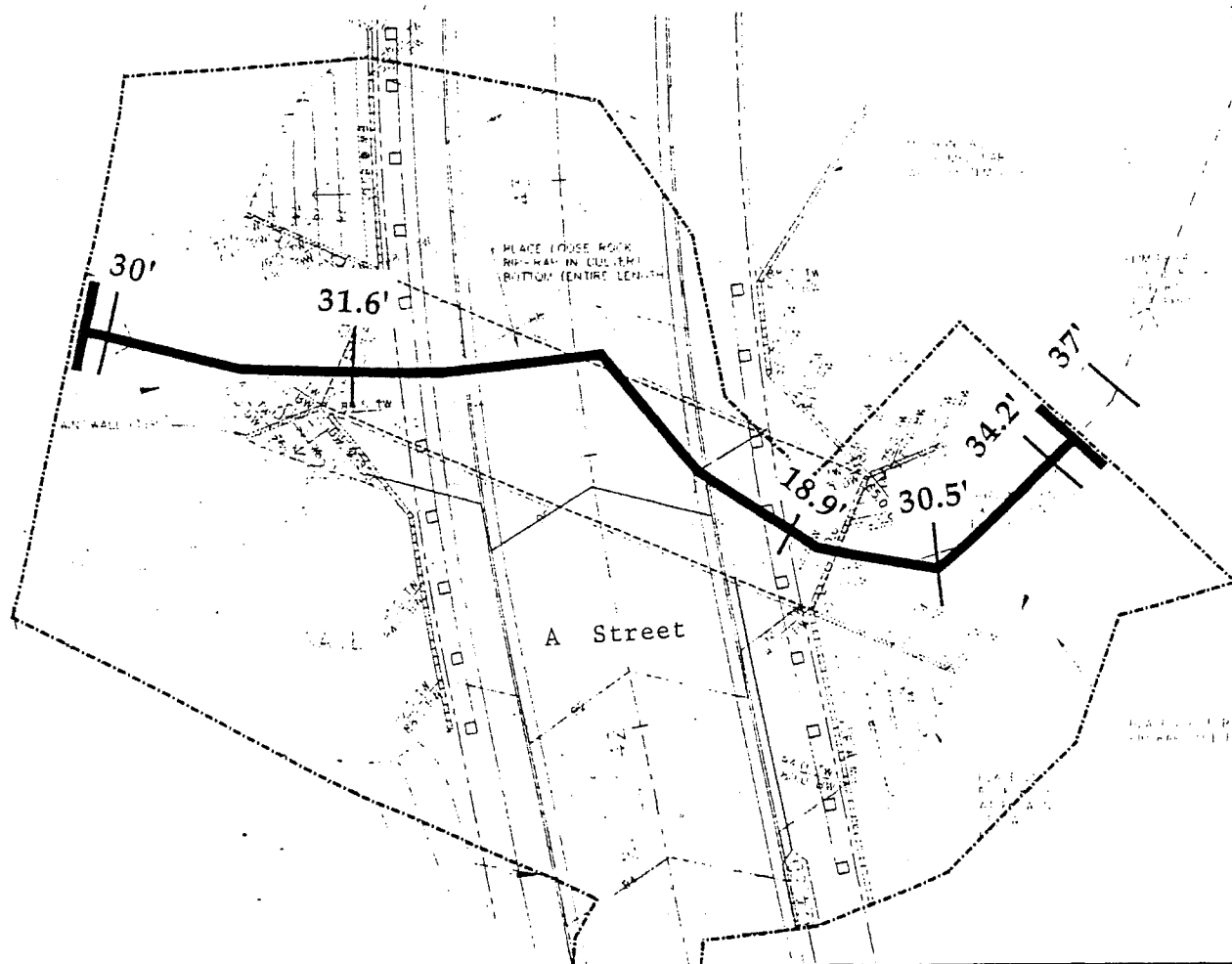


PURPOSE: Residential Development	Areas Subject To Corps Jurisdiction	Fieldcrest Project
DATUM: NGVD	NOT TO SCALE	LOCATION: Cordelia, CA Less than one mile south of I-80 and Red Top Road Interchange
ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERS: See Appendix C of Permit Application	North RIO Associates 480 Gate 5 Rd. Suite 300 Sausalito, CA 94965 (415) 331-0268	COUNTY: Solano APPLICATION BY: A.D. Seeno Construction
		SHEET: 3B of 7 DATE: 12/9/97

Bridge Crossing at Northeast Corner of Project Site

**LEGEND**

- Waters of the U.S. w/in Footprint of Bridge Crossing
- 30' - Width of Drainage at OHWM
- Project Study Area



PURPOSE: Residential Development

DATUM: NGVD

ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERS:  
See Appendix C of Permit Application

Areas Subject to Corps Jurisdiction  
Crossing at American Canyon Creek

SCALE: 1" = ~33'  
North

RIO Associates  
480 Gate 5 Rd.  
Suite 300  
Sausalito, CA 94965  
(415) 331-0268

Fieldcrest Project

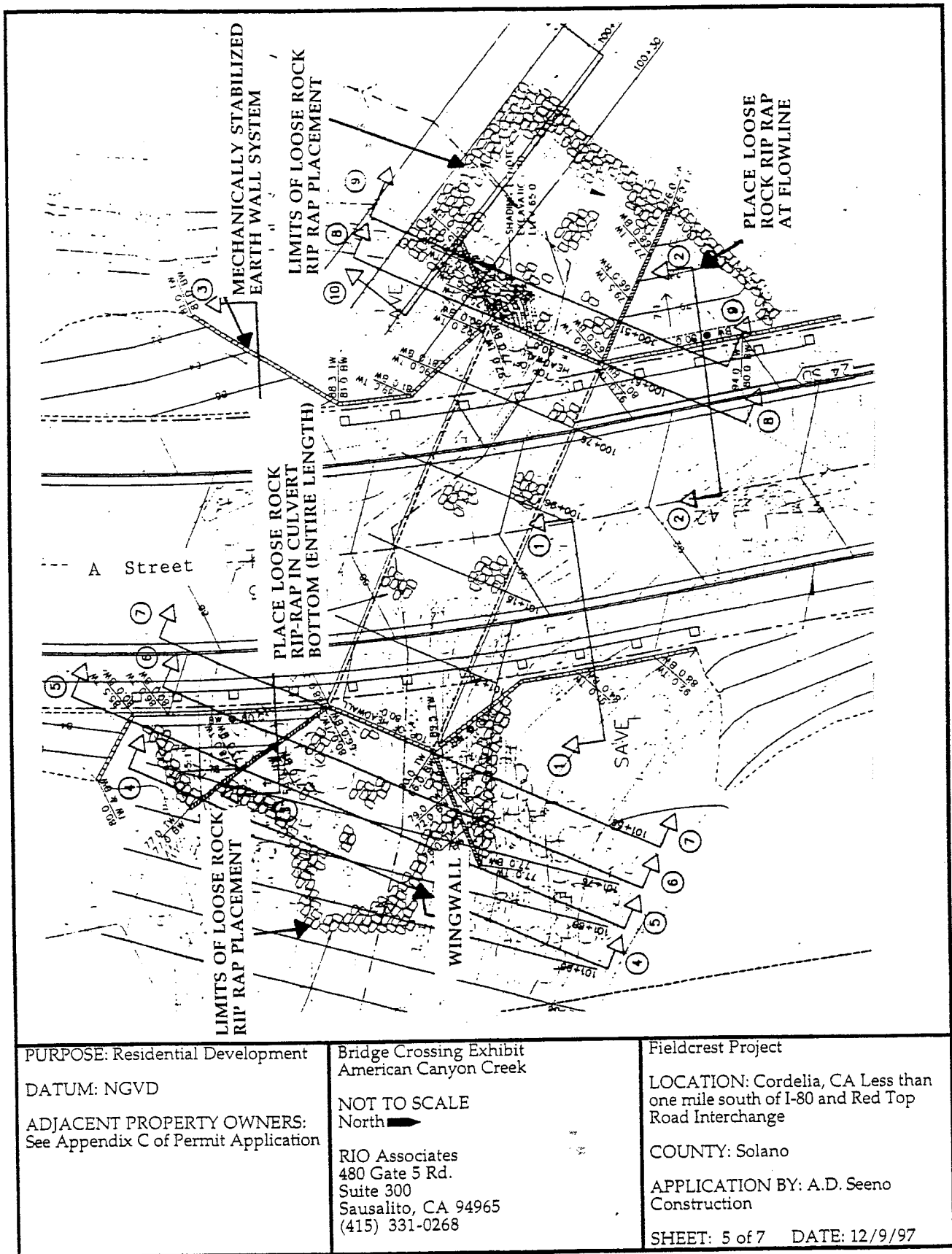
LOCATION: Cordelia, CA Less than  
one mile south of I-80 and Red Top  
Road Interchange

COUNTY: Solano

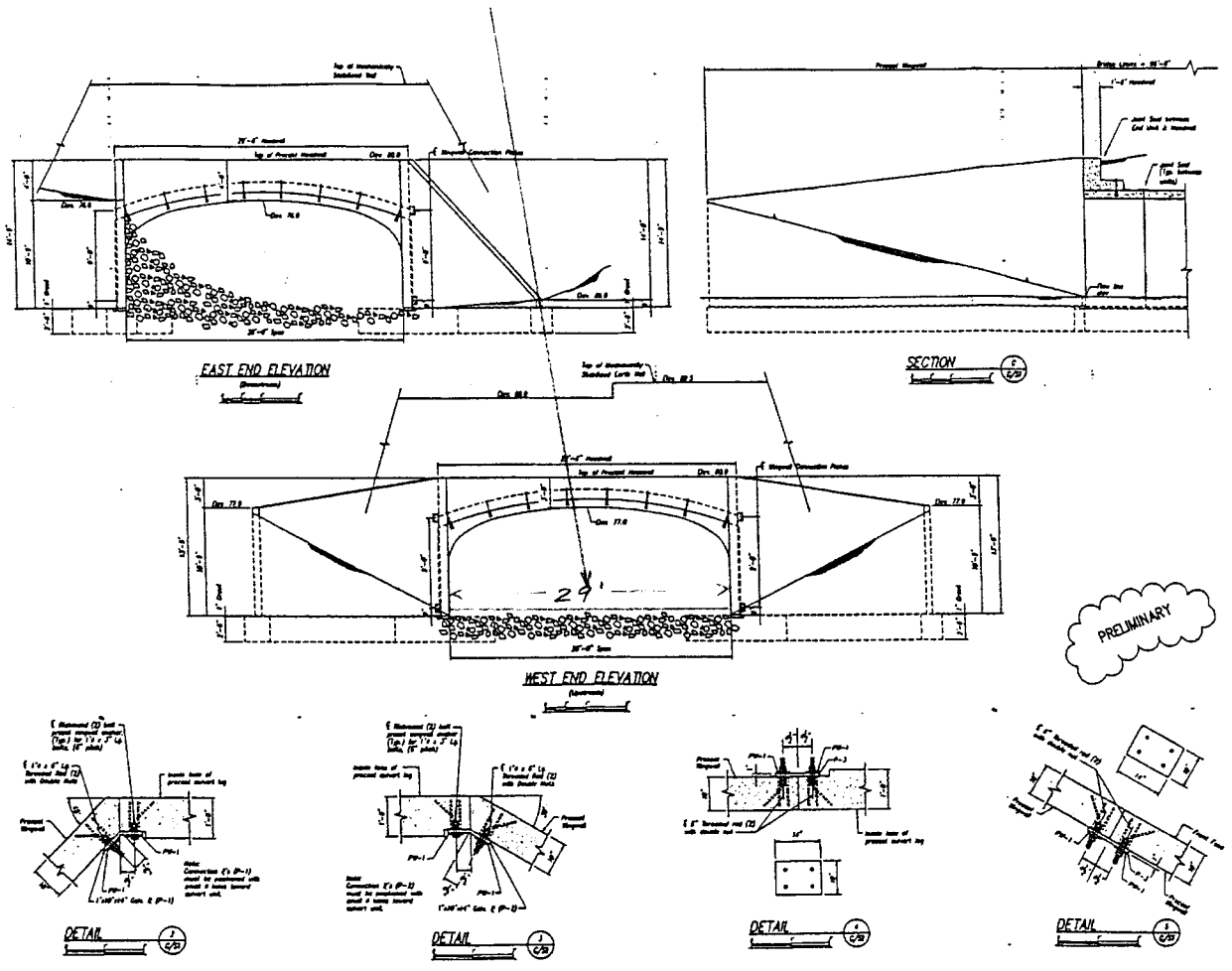
APPLICATION BY: A.D. Seeno  
Construction

SHEET: 4 of 7 DATE: 12/9/97

Bridge Crossing at Northeast Corner of Proposed Project Site



Width across creek below bridge crossing  
at OHW = 29 feet, with a depth of 3.2 feet  
at it's midpoint

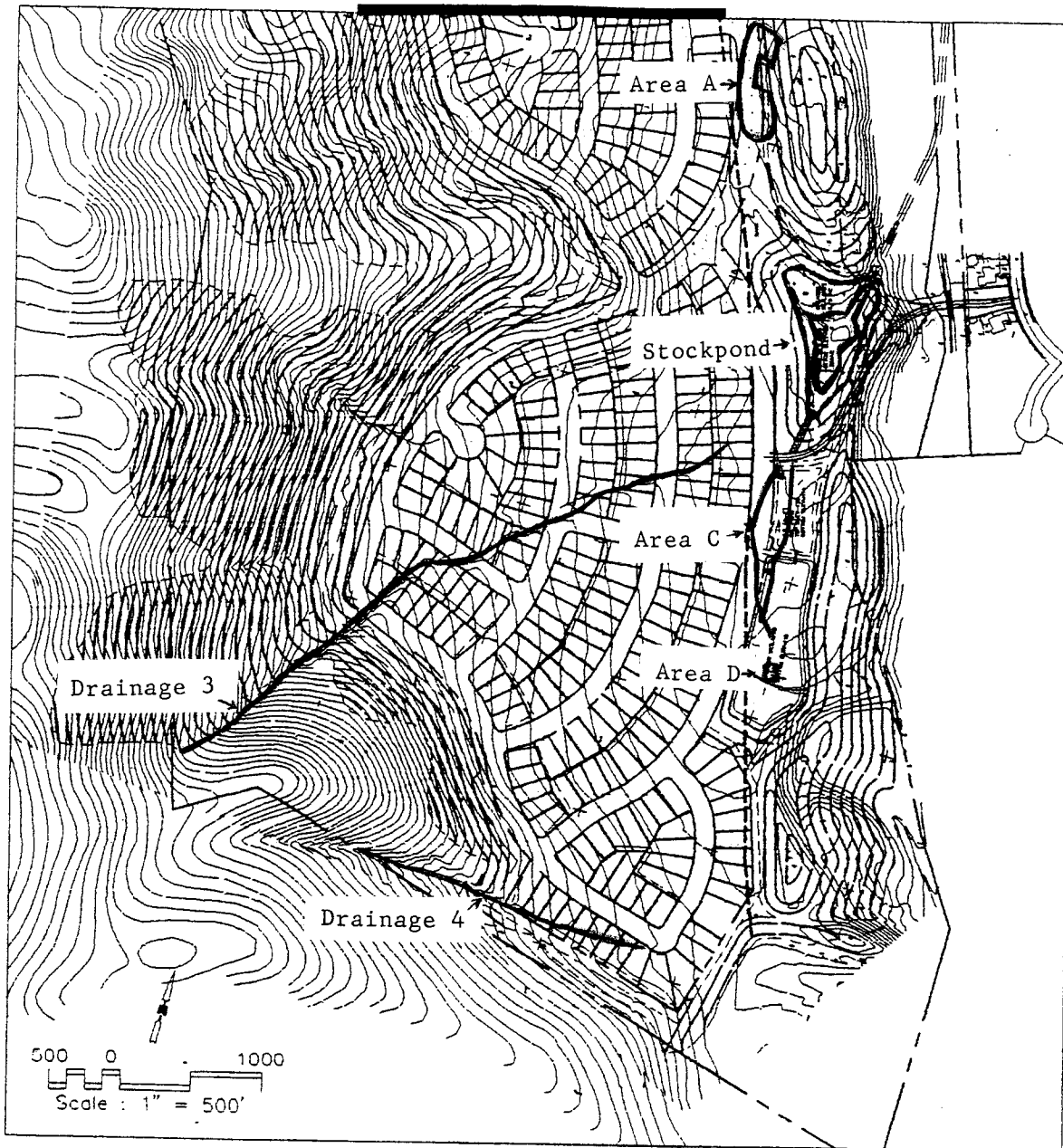


PURPOSE: Residential Development  
DATUM: NGVD  
ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERS:  
See Appendix C of Permit Application

Bridge Design Details  
American Canyon Creek Crossing  
NOT TO SCALE  
RIO Associates  
480 Gate 5 Rd.  
Suite 300  
Sausalito, CA 94965  
(415) 331-0268

Fieldcrest Project  
LOCATION: Cordelia, CA Less than  
one mile south of I-80 and Red Top  
Road Interchange  
COUNTY: Solano  
APPLICATION BY: A.D. Seeno  
Construction  
SHEET: 6 of 7 DATE: 12/9/97

MATCH LINE 7B



The Locations of Drainage and Wetland Areas are Approximate

PURPOSE: Residential Development

DATUM: NGVD

ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERS:  
See Appendix C of Permit Application

Development Grading Plan

NOT TO SCALE

RIO Associates  
480 Gate 5 Rd.  
Suite 300  
Sausalito, CA 94965  
(415) 331-0268

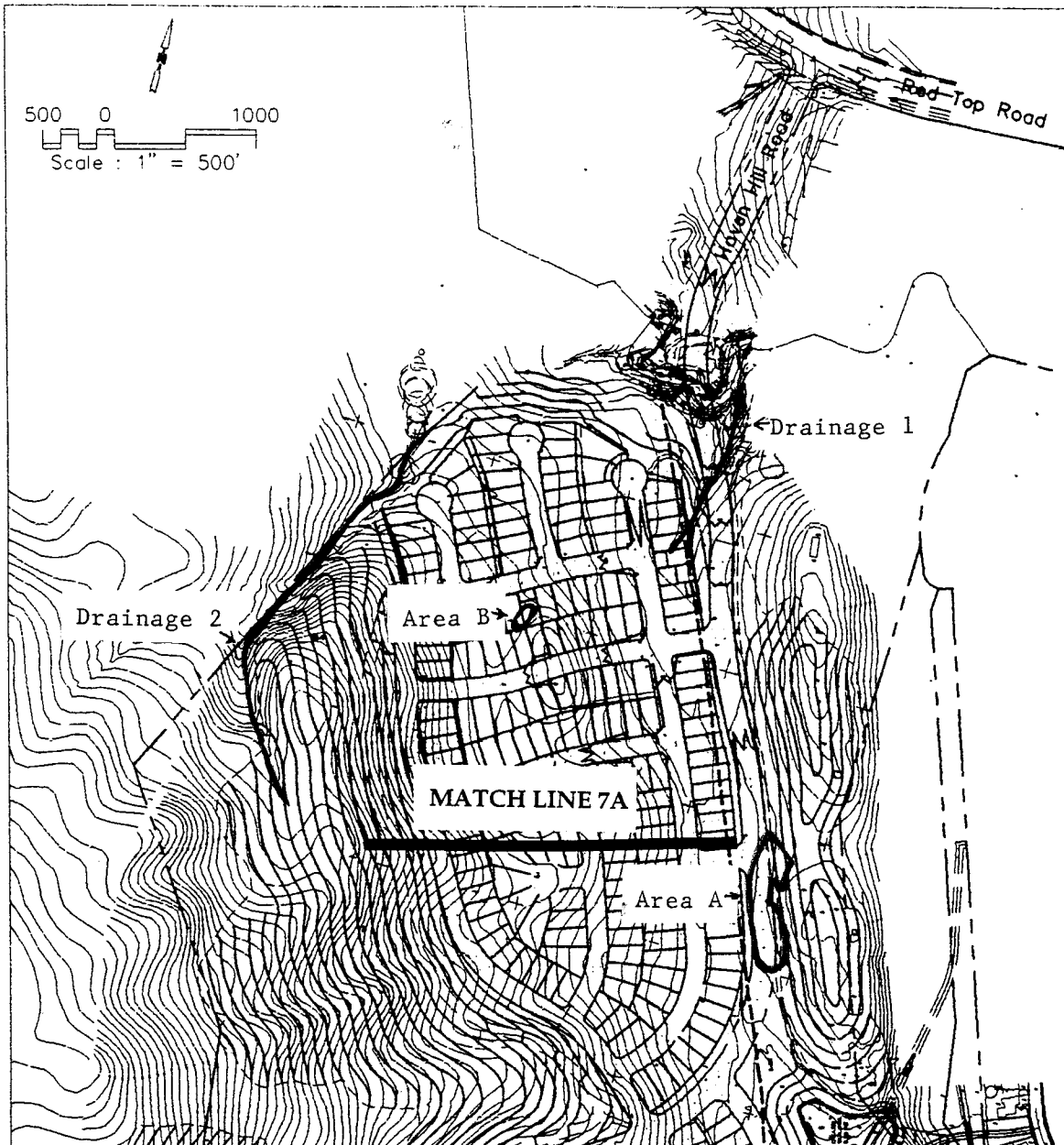
Fieldcrest Project

LOCATION: Cordelia, CA Less than  
one mile south of I-80 and Red Top  
Road Interchange

COUNTY: Solano

APPLICATION BY: A.D. Seeno  
Construction

SHEET: 7A of 7 DATE: 12/9/97



The Locations of Drainage and Wetland Areas are Approximate

PURPOSE: Residential Development	Development Grading Plan	Fieldcrest Project
DATUM: NGVD	NOT TO SCALE	LOCATION: Cordelia, CA Less than one mile south of I-80 and Red Top Road Interchange
ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERS: See Appendix C of Permit Application	RIO Associates 480 Gate 5 Rd. Suite 300 Sausalito, CA 94965 (415) 331-0268	COUNTY: Solano
		APPLICATION BY: A.D. Seeno Construction
		SHEET: 7B of 7    DATE: 12/9/97